penal provision more deterrent. Meanwhile, the report of the Second National Commission has also been received. The Commission has recommended a unified law on wages including the Minimum Wages Act, 1948. The Government proposes to frame a law on wages and in that event, the amendments under consideration would not be required.

(d) The Minimum Wages Act provides for enforcement of minimum wages. In the Central sphere it is secured through the officers of the Central Industrial Refations Machinery while in the State sphere, through state enforcement machinery. The officers of these machineries conduct inspections regularly and advise the employers to make payment of shortfall of wages whenever they detect any case of non-payment or less payment of minimum wages. In case of non-adherence to the advice, there are legal and penal provisions against the defaulting employers.

**Rate of interest on P.F.**

987. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government intend to enhance the rate of interest on Provident Fund accumulation for the year 2002-03 to 10.5 per cent per year as against the 9.5 per cent; and

(b) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

**Employment opportunities**

† 988. SHRI KRIPAL PARMAR: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the number of new employment opportunities created in Government Services, organised industries, small scale industries and unorganized sector separately during the last.three years; and

(b) the number of permanent casual and contract labourers out of these respectively?

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Estimated employment in the Government, organised sector (including Government), unorganized sector and small scale industries during 1997-98,1998-99 and 1999-2000 is as given below:

(in lakh)

| Sector J | Estimated Employment | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 1997-98 | 1998-99 | 1999-2000 |
| Government | 107.11 | 107.71 | 107.33 |
| Organised (including Government) | 281.66 | 281.13 | 279.60 |
| Unorganized | Not Available | Not Available | 3690.00 |
| Small Scale Industry | 167.20 | 171.58 | 178.50 |

(b) As per the National Sample Survey estimates 13.9% and 33.2% of the total work force of 397 million were regular salaries and casual workers respectively during 1999-2000.

**Modernization of EPF**

† 989. SHRI NANDI YELLAIAH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Board of Trustees of the Employees Provident Fund has sanctioned a comprehensive plan for information-technology-based modernization of the Employees Provident Fund so that employees may settle their claims in any office of the Employees Provident Fund in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) by when the said plan is likely to be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) to (c) The Central Board of Trustees (Employees Provident Fund) has approved in October, 2002 a modernisation programme, which will enable the subscribers to access their accounts and file their claims from any of the EPF offices as against

† Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.